

FEB 2

STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
DONALD A. QUARLES  
BEFORE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Gentlemen:

I welcome this opportunity to discuss with you the strength and effectiveness of the Air Force.

In building and keeping our guard against aggression in these atomic times, we have moved into a competitive situation calling for, before every other defense need, a capability to meet the main threat -- the chance of all-out air/atomic war. This means we must have, and must plan to keep as our first priority, the kind of offensive and defensive forces that are strong enough to win the initial violent air/atomic battle. I believe our program, as projected ahead by our budget requests, will prove a sound solution to this difficult problem; and that it will do so within the reasonable bounds of our national resources.

We are requesting \$17,746 billion of new obligational authority.

Our corresponding request last year was \$16.5 billion. The increase is some \$1.246 billion in obligational authority. However, subsequent to our budget request last year the President asked the Congress for a supplemental appropriation to the Air Force of \$376.5 million. The Congress appropriated substantially the sums requested by the President and an additional \$900 million. Taking these actions into account, and assuming the sums now requested are appropriated, our position

this year would represent roughly a \$2.5 billion improvement over the original FY 1957 level. We made it clear last year that we would need substantial increases in FY 58, and in my judgment this present request will meet our urgent requirements.

With the resources that the Congress made available to us in our Fiscal Year 1957 budget, and the supplemental appropriations, we have provided for substantial increases in the inherent strength of the Air Force. In my judgment we have applied these increments to best advantage and I believe that, with our request this year, it will be possible for us to continue to increase our combat capability at a significant rate and to keep the Air Force in a sound position in relation to the fast growing Communist air power.

Combat capability is the end product of our efforts and, therefore, is the best measure of our management success in converting appropriated funds into effective military strength. Today the Air Force is capable of delivering tremendously greater firepower on more targets more quickly and accurately than ever before, and with greater certainty. Moreover, I believe that this power, which the Fiscal Year 1958 budget will support and improve, can continue to exert an effective restraining force on Communist aggression.

We are converting rapidly to new and improved equipment. This proposed FY 1958 budget will modernize and improve many

critically needed facilities and will increase our effectiveness and overall capability to accomplish our assigned missions.

Our capability always must be related to the air/atomic capability of our potential enemy. We can consider that our Air Power is sufficient only if it carries conviction to potential enemies that aggression against us would be futile -- and only as long as it exerts this deterrent effect by confronting would-be aggressors with a retaliatory capability which they could neither destroy nor escape. It is my opinion that with careful management, the appropriations we now request, taken in the context of the appropriations to the Air Force by the Congress last year, will support an adequate Air Force program in Fiscal Year 1958. Let me outline some of the specific military features of this program.

In our atomic striking forces -- the key element of our deterrent retaliatory strength -- our position will be improved by the accelerated addition of B-52 bombers and the continued retirement of the older B-36s from first-line assignments. By the end of FY 1958 we expect to have eight wings of B-52s with 45 aircraft in each wing and three wings of B-36s with 30 aircraft per wing. For the overall program -- B-52s for the entire eleven wings -- we have scheduled 603 aircraft. We are procuring 502 of this number in the 1957 <sup>and prior</sup> program and the FY 1958 budget includes the remaining 101. Further production of the B-52 beyond these requirements depends upon the progress of our first supersonic bomber -- the B-58 -- which is a follow-on for the B-47 medium bomber.

If it should prove necessary or desirable to delay the production of the B-58, we may apply a part of the funds earmarked for the B-58 to the support of a larger B-52 program.

It will be recalled that, in terms of units, the Air Force objective, established in 1953, has been to build up to 137 combat wings. A year ago we planned to reach that objective by the end of the current fiscal year, that is by June 30, 1957.

While we will have a force of 137 wings next June, these will not be the wings we discussed last year. For instance, one strategic fighter wing is being redesignated as a fighter-bomber wing. Five fighter wings scheduled for completion in FY 1957 will not be completed, so at the end of this year we will have on board 132 of the 137 wings in the previous schedule. The aircraft made available by this program change will be used to modernize units of the Air Reserve Forces earlier than originally planned.

On the other hand, four troop carrier assault wings are becoming combat-ready this year and will be added to the major combat forces. In addition, our first combat-ready tactical missile wing, equipped with the Matador, will be added to our force structure, for a year-end total of 137 wings.

In FY 1958 we propose to reduce this force to 128 wings, by dropping five strategic fighter wings, one tactical bomber wing, and three fighter-bomber wings. These changes are not arbitrary but stem from a thorough review of the task to be accomplished and the means at our disposal to get the job done.

Dropping the strategic fighter wings in this time period does not materially affect the capability of our strategic forces.

By the end of Fiscal Year 1958, the strategic bombardment units will be composed of 8 B-52 wings, 3 B-36 wings and 28 B-47 wings.

The Air Defense wings remain at 32 at end FY 1958. There will, however, be a significant modernization of our manned interceptors as they convert to the supersonic Century series aircraft. Century series aircraft afford a very substantial increase in our defensive capability.

Important progress is being made in the unmanned or missile element of our Air Defense Force.

Our tactical forces are decreasing in number of wings, partly because of the greater firepower of each wing and partly because the Army's tactical missile program will reduce its requirements for close support by fighter-bombers. We are replacing older subsonic aircraft with supersonic aircraft. By the end of FY 1958 our tactical fighter-bomber and day fighter wings will be almost completely converted to supersonic Century series aircraft. Another factor in the decreased number of tactical wings is that our allies have increased their forces and capabilities in the tactical field and are now able to accept greater responsibilities.

Our airlift forces are dictated by wartime airlift requirements. We believe that our programmed airlift forces, which include the Military Air Transport Service, our troop

carrier units, our Air Force Reserve units, and aircraft of the Civil Reserve Air Fleet, can meet our essential wartime airlift requirements both in transportation of priority cargo and personnel and support of airborne assault operations.

The Air Force ballistic missile development program is on a highly accelerated basis. In general we are holding to the schedule for development established more than a year ago.

In research and development the \$661 million for Fiscal Year 1958 will enable us to continue technical programming at approximately the same level. This includes additional amounts required for the ballistic missile program and for normal increases in the Operations and Management program of this appropriation.

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This is a strong research and development program as I believe it needs to be if we are to meet the Communist challenge to our qualitative position. It is the key factor in keeping our aircraft and equipment out ahead of our competition. In this connection I would like to say that our drawing board to inventory lead-time, which has come in for some criticism recently, is not in itself a good measure of the effectiveness of development effort. The real question is not how long it takes to do the job but how good the job is in relation to the state of the art, and, particularly the state of the competitor's art, when it reaches the operational stage. The eight years that we took to bring out the B-52 bomber in comparison with an alleged four or five years required by the Soviets for their Bison bomber is a good case in point. In the first place, I

doubt that we know just what the comparable Soviet interval was.

In the second place, the facts are that the B-52 is a substantially more advanced and higher performance weapon system than the Bison. In the third place, while at one time Bisons appeared to lead B-52s in production, the present indications are that B-52s are substantially ahead in numbers as well as quality and there is every prospect that they will remain so. It seems fair to conclude that the development interval, whether it is four years or eight years, is a minor rather than a major consideration. The important point is to be sure that the weapon system finally produced is at the forefront of the art.

The main portion of our distant early warning line -- the DEW Line -- is nearing completion on schedule. Eastern and Western extensions are programmed and partially funded. The system is designed to provide longer warning time in event of air attack.

Concurrently we are pushing the development and testing of our semi-automatic ground environment system, known as SAGE. This system, which is essential to control our advanced air defense weapons against multiple targets, is advancing on approximately the same schedule that was presented last year.

In discussing our military construction budget last year, I expressed the view that expenditures would have to be maintained at \$1 billion to \$1.2 billion per year for some years to come. Our Fiscal Year 1958 request is in line with this prediction. As in previous years, the bulk of the funds requested will be used in high priority operational programs with but a

minimum for base support facilities. We must have these funds if we are to provide essential facilities for the dispersal and other needs of our strategic force, for the build-up of our defense system, and for important support facilities.

In Title VIII family housing the progress has not been as favorable as we hoped for a year ago. Three projects are under way, and one of these is being occupied. Unless we are slowed down by a tight money market, we expect to have about 54,000 of the presently estimated 61,000-unit program under contract and 23,000 ready for occupancy by end Fiscal Year 1958. I am sure there is no need for me to emphasize how strongly this matter of adequate family housing bears on the vital problem of retaining experienced and trained men in the Air Force.

The Air Force continues to face the crucial problem of an adequate supply of experienced, technically trained, career-minded people to operate and maintain our forces. We have made some important progress in solving the problem of retention of needed individuals in the Air Force, and I assure you that we appreciate the support and understanding of the Congress in this problem. We still have a long way to go in retaining pilots, technicians and other skilled people. We are hopeful -- as one big step in that direction -- that the recommendations of the committee established by Secretary Wilson and headed by Mr. Ralph Cordiner of General Electric will produce legislative recommendations that will receive favorable consideration.

We are proud of the progress which our Air Force Reserve forces are making. By the end of FY 1958 we will have 24 Air



Force Reserve wings consisting of 18 troop carrier and 6 fighter-bomber wings. We plan to increase and modernize the aircraft in these units with F-86Hs and C-119s.

Our Air National Guard will provide significant elements of our air power. By the end of FY 1958 it will consist of 27 tactical wings and various support type units. Guard equipment is being modernized and the units should have 100% of their authorized aircraft by June 1958.

The program we are presenting recognizes the need to be ready day-in and day-out to respond in any emergency, <sup>at</sup> and the *same time* ~~the~~ need to build wisely for the future. Current readiness is strongly influenced by training programs, and by equipment and base maintenance, funds for which are provided by our Operation and Maintenance appropriation. Again this year it has been necessary to request a substantial increase in this account and I believe the funds requested are necessary if we are to make the best use of the men and materiel provided. It is poor economy to provide new aircraft, new missiles, and new facilities, and not provide the means to keep them operating efficiently.

*Note: Training has not budgeted as yet.*

As General Twining will deal with several of these matters, I will not undertake to go into more detail at this time. It is probable that after hearing him you will have some questions concerning the Air Force program, and if so, we will do our best to provide you with the specific information you request.

In closing then let me summarize my views:

The rapid build-up of air/atomic power behind the Iron Curtain poses the primary threat to the security of our country.

We must maintain sufficient ready forces to counter this threat, that is, to convince the Communists that they could not profit by using their forces against us. While I believe we clearly have such a deterrent position today, it will require our best efforts with the resources available to us to maintain this position in the years ahead. We must recognize that our position two to five years hence is determined in considerable part by the equipment we procure today, and our position five to ten years hence is largely dependent upon the Research and Development program we support today.

I believe that the great increase in the unit firepower of our forces justifies the downward adjustment in wing structure we have projected and that the power of our forces will continue to increase in spite of this adjustment. This increase will be both a necessary and a sufficient response to the growing power of our competition -- provided: (1) we receive the funds requested to support our program; (2) we manage our resources to best advantage; and (3) we succeed in making further substantial improvement in the level of experience and training of our technical personnel.

I appreciate very much this opportunity to discuss with you the present and planned posture of the Air Force.